

EXCLUSIVE SALVATION,

BY

JOHN JAQUES,

ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

THE doctrine of Exclusive Salvation, or salvation by *one* Lord, *one* Faith, *one* Baptism, *one* method, *one* system, *one* Gospel, *one* Priesthood only ; is at the present time an exceedingly unpopular doctrine. But popularity or unpopularity can never make truth error, nor error truth. If the doctrine of exclusive salvation be a false doctrine, world-wide popularity will never make it true. If, on the contrary, it be a true doctrine, the most crushing unpopularity will never destroy its immutability and truthfulness. The subject, then, should be investigated in the abstract, entirely independent of popularity or unpopularity. Let us rather call to our aid common sense, reason, and revelation. My object will be to show most clearly that exclusive salvation is a true, reasonable, and scriptural doctrine, that it is an absolute impossibility for a real *Bible believer* to entertain a contrary thought.

Ostensibly a great part of Christendom disavow exclusive salvation. But, if the point be pressed home, all sects must acknowledge the truth of the doctrine, or at once proclaim themselves false teachers, impostors, deluders, entirely destitute of the least shadow of legal authority to officiate as teachers of religion. One or other of these conclusions is inevitable.

I ask the Baptist minister, what induces him to occupy his time in preaching up a particular creed ? Why not labor in the fields, or at some mechanical trade ? He answers, he can be more usefully employed in preaching. I ask, of what use is his preaching ? His answer must be, for the salvation of souls. But I may further remark, the established church is supposed to exist for the very purpose of saving souls ; has colleges for to properly qualify persons to preach ; has a church in nearly every village where salvation is supposed to be taught ; has ministers who are paid, pensioned, salaried, for the express purpose of doing this necessary work of salvation. Why not leave the work of salvation to them altogether ? Why interfere in their appointed and acknowledged calling ? His answer must be, his only answer can be, that the established church is not the true church ; that its ministers have no true authority, and that they do not preach the true method of salvation ; that his own Baptist church is the true church of Christ ; that Baptist ministers are the true au-

thorized preachers of salvation, and that they preach the true and only method of salvation. He cannot shrink from this. He is driven in a corner. There is no way of escape. He must either own his neighbour churchman a false teacher, and himself a true one, or confess himself a base, hypocritical impostor, having no authority whatever: a wretched panderer to the depraved vitiated mental tastes and itching ears of a dishonest or deluded portion of the community. Thus he cannot deny the doctrine of exclusive salvation; he is pushed upon it, and it breaks him to pieces.

Some might be inclined to suggest the idea that both Episcopalian and Baptist churches are true, that the ministers of both churches have authority—equal authority, the one with the other. This is virtually condemning both parties. It is utterly impossible for two opposing churches of equal authority to be one true church, or part and parcels of the true church. No sane person could broach such an idea. Two conflicting principles can never become one principle, worlds without end. One principle must drop. If you tell me that two disagreeing sects have equal authority, I am bold to affirm that neither of them have any authority at all, and every sensible man will back my affirmation. Her Majesty, Victoria, is the true and rightful queen of England. Her claim is undoubted, her authority is indisputable. She reigns exclusively. Why? Because she is the nation's only true sovereign. It is a thing impossible for any other woman to have just claim to equal authority. The royal prerogative is vested solely in one person. No other person can have the slightest legal claim to it. So the true and legal authority and prerogative of salvation, can be solely vested in one church. No other church can have the slightest lawful claim to it. The true Church may have many branches upon various portions of the earth's surface, but they must all be united, and subject to the Head.

Two true churches, two true creeds, two true preachers, differing from each other, contradicting each other, present an irreconcilable impossibility. It is perfectly senseless—monstrous—the wildest, most far-fetched idea that could be conceived. Its birth-place must have been “beyond the bounds of time and space.” The simplest capacity, the narrowest mind, can perceive at a glance the thorough unreasonableness of such an idea. Yet unreasonable as it is, senseless as it is, monstrous as it is, still it is a favourite point, a bright specimen of the wise folly of our “gospel blaze,” Christendom. Can we wonder at the rapid spread of deism, atheism, infidelity, or unbelief, when we consider the foolish, nonsensical doctrines which are gravely taught in our day, with all the sanctity, longfacedness, impudence, and insolence, imaginable? Can we wonder the world is sick of religion? Is it strange that intelligent Roman Catholics should consider sectarianism a wicked soul-destroying heresy? What is the natural effect of men seeing an hundred opposing sects, all believing differently, teaching differently, and acting differently, yet at the same time taking one another by the hand as brothers, and with all gravity declaring to the world they have conjointly one faith, one hope, one calling? Why, the natural, the legitimate effect is, that straightforward thinking men will consider them all as so many arch deceivers, conniving at the accomplishment of party purposes, or grossly ignorant of what they affirm, and in either case their profession is a misnomer upon themselves. On the other hand: what is the natural effect upon clear-minded men of an hundred different sects, all calling themselves Christians, all believing in one Bible, one code of laws, all professing to be guided by one spirit; yet, at the same time, none teaching in accordance with the Bible, each one teaching contrary doctrines,

each one governed by contrary laws, each one actuated by a contrary spirit, each one openly declaring all the rest are false, and, of course, condemning them to eternal flames? Let us take the answer of Cobbett, "The natural, the necessary effect is, that many will believe that none of them have truth on their side, and, of course, that the thing is false altogether, and invented solely for the benefit of those who teach it, and who dispute about it." The French infidels knew full well there could be but one true religion; consequently, if forty were presented before them, thirty-nine must of necessity be false.

View it whichever way we will, the notorious inconsistency of sectarianism is singularly manifest. THERE IS ONLY ONE TRUE FAITH. Common sense, reason, and Revelation establish the undeniable fact. It is, out of sheer necessity, an incontrovertible truth. A deist, or an atheist, is called all sorts of ill names, and his society considered pestiferous by professing Christians, because he will not associate the inconsistencies, confusions, and glaring contradictions of modern Christianity, with the beautiful, sublime, and magnificent idea of an overruling Deity, possessing infinite power, wisdom, and glory. Whilst these same professing Christians embrace with cordial affection those who credit the monstrous lie, the base calumny, the heaven-daring libel, that the Great Jehovah is the grand author of all this confusion. O folly! Fie, fie! Christendom!

The doctrine of exclusive salvation is an eternal principle, indestructible as the Throne of Jehovah. It existed before the first creation, has existed ever since, and will exist after the last creation. Were it not for this principle of exclusiveness there would be no law, no justice, no mercy, no order, no organization, no honor, no glory, no virtue; no reward, no punishment, no heaven, no hell; nothing to fear, nothing to hope. This earth would be as good as heaven, and Jehovah's throne no more to be desired than the prison-house of the damned. It is this very principle of exclusiveness that creates the difference between truth and error, between angels and devils, between salvation and damnation. It is this very principle that determines, with unerring certainty, every gradation between virtue and vice, between honour and dishonor, between glory and shame.

But now let us examine scripture evidence upon the subject of exclusive salvation. We will begin in the beginning, and trace downwards in the course of time.

The only way in which the harmony of heaven could be maintained was by rigid observance of the exclusive doctrine of perfect submission to the head. Lucifer, son of the morning, undertook to question the point. He was cast down. Others sided with him and shared his fate.

Adam was placed in the garden of Eden, where was every thing that would please the eye, captivate the senses, or delight the heart. Jehovah revealed to him the doctrine of exclusive salvation: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The only, the exclusive method of salvation proposed from sin, sorrow, and death, was this,—abstinence from the fruit of a particular tree. It was an irrevocable decree, by lawful authority, even the Eternal God. It mattered not what the devil said, what Eve said, or what any other personage said, however exalted his station or great his authority. The doctrine of exclusive salvation was given; it was true, it was faithful. The devil, wily and subtle, preached against exclusive salvation; said it was a false doctrine: "*Ye shall not surely die.*" He deceived Eve; Eve persuaded Adam; Adam transgressed; the devil was proved a liar; Adam discovered by painful experience, and his posterity to this day are witnesses in themselves

of the truth of the doctrine of exclusive salvation. Thus it will be seen that it is a true doctrine, and the devil the opposer of it from the beginning.

But we must pass hastily through the scriptures. We have not space nor time to examine the testimony of the ancient worthies, the prophets, one by one, or we should discover that they all, without exception, preached the doctrine of exclusive salvation ; who were sent to preach at all.

We come to Noah, the famous diluvian preacher of righteousness. One hundred and twenty years whilst the ark was building did Noah preach the doctrine of exclusive salvation. The only, the exclusive method of salvation prepared and appointed, was the ark. It was perfectly immaterial what other prophets or teachers might teach or believe. The doctrine of Noah was true, and God would authorise no one to preach any other contrary doctrine. Noah's doctrine was an exceedingly unpopular doctrine, if we may judge by his numerical success. The majority of mankind made light of it: "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark." The terrific roar of the overflowing waters was a fearful testimony to the antediluvians, in favour of the doctrine of exclusive salvation.

Lot preached the doctrine of exclusive salvation ; and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah experienced its truth to their utter dismay, consternation, and destruction.

Moses preached the doctrine of exclusive salvation, and the punishments consequent upon opposition to this doctrine were severely felt by the Egyptians at the Red Sea, by the Israelites in the wilderness, and by the Canaanites who fell before the children of Israel.

Looking up to the brazen serpent made by Moses, was the exclusive method of salvation from the deadly effects of the bite of the fiery serpents which the Lord sent.

Korah, Dathan, Abiram, Saul, Uzzah, and the prophets of Baal, can testify to the truth of this doctrine.

Naaman's indignant wrath, and haughty pride were all in vain ; his servant persuaded him that the exclusive method of salvation from his leprosy consisted in obedience to the voice of the man of God, even washing himself seven times in the river Jordan. No matter what Naaman or any body else thought or said. *Six* washings in the river Jordan would not have availed anything, neither would *seven* washings in *any other river* but the river Jordan have produced the desired effect.

Repentance at the preaching of Jonah, proved exclusive salvation to the Ninevites.

John the Baptist preached the doctrine of exclusive salvation : " And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees ; therefore, every tree which bringeth forth not good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire."

Jesus Christ preached the doctrine of exclusive salvation : " Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. I am the way, the truth, and the life ; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a *thief and a robber*. There shall be *one* fold and *one* shepherd. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be *one* as we are. Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature ; he that believeth and is baptized shall be *saved*, but he that believeth not shall be *damned*." Exclusive enough

this. There were many Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, in the days of Jesus, but their religions were not sufficiently exclusive: "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in *no case* enter into the kingdom of heaven.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter filled with the Holy Ghost preached the doctrine of exclusive salvation to men of every nation under heaven. Hear him: "Repent and be baptized, *every one of you*, in the name of Jesus Christ. Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Three thousand persons believed the word of exclusive salvation by Peter, and in token thereof were baptized the same day. The reader will recollect that these three thousand persons were not what are generally considered *wicked sinners*, but *religious, devout men*, who had proven their sincerity and faithfulness by coming up from all nations to Jerusalem, expressly "to worship." But their religion, their devotion, their worship was insufficient; it was not exclusive enough, and Peter had sufficient charity to boldly proclaim this. Sincerity in an individual is *no proof* that he is in the "right way." I might wish to go from Manchester to Edinburgh, but if I unwittingly started on the London road, with my back to Edinburgh, I should not reach the place of my destination, but every step I took would increase the distance between me and it. The only, the exclusive means by which I could reach Edinburgh, would be to travel on the road to Edinburgh.

Hear Peter further: "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved."

Though Cornelius received the ministration of angels, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, he found that salvation was exclusive, and Peter commanded him to be baptized, in order that he might be saved.

The devils know the truth of the doctrine of exclusive salvation. Said one,—“Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?”

James preached the doctrine of exclusive salvation: "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in *one point*, he is *guilty of all*."

Jude preached the doctrine of exclusive salvation: "It was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who *separate themselves*; sensual, having not the Spirit."

St. John preached the doctrine of exclusive salvation: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not of us. These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone into the world. We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. Whosoever transgresseth and *abideth not* in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ,

he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not *this doctrine*, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds."

Lastly, the apostle Paul firmly believed, and strenuously contended for the doctrine of exclusive salvation. He knew it was the hope of the righteous, and the bulwark of heaven. What does he say? "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye *could not be justified* by the law of Moses. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak *the same thing*, and that there be *no divisions* amongst you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in *the same mind*, and in the *same judgment*. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions amongst you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul? For ye are yet carnal; for whereas, there is amongst you envying and strife, and divisions; are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? * Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

"Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of *one mind*. I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another: but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach *any other gospel* unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again. If any man preach *any other gospel* unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth? That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together *in one* all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. There is *one* body and *one* Spirit, even as ye are called in *one* hope of your calling. *One* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every kind of doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. That ye stand fast in *one* Spirit, with *one* mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some

* For whilst one saith, I am of Wesley; and another says, I am of Luther; and another says, I am of Calvin; and another says, I am of Campbell, are ye not carnal? We have need to learn again the *first principles* of the gospel.

shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, *speaking lies in hypocrisy*. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine : continue in it ; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. This know, also, that in the last days perilous times shall come ; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a *form of godliness* but denying the *power* thereof : from such turn away. Ever *learning*, and never able to come to the *knowledge* of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth : men of corrupt minds, reprobates concerning the faith. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived ; for the time will come when they will not *endure* sound doctrine, but *after their own lusts* shall they *heap to themselves* teachers having *itching ears* : and they shall turn away their ears from the *truth*, and shall be turned unto *fables*. They *profess* that they know God, but *in works* they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate."

With such an overwhelming flood of Scripture testimony in favour of salvation by one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one Priesthood, one Gospel, how does our blood boil within us, and our bosoms burn with indignation, when we recollect that *teachers of religion*, with the *Bible* in their hands, have the unblushing effrontery to promise us salvation by just what lord, what faith, what baptism, what priesthood, what gospel *we choose* ? And some have actually the infamous audacity to tell us that we can be saved *without any priesthood or any baptism at all* ! Oh, how have our eyes been *blinded* ! How grossly we have been *deceived* ! How awfully we have been *deluded* ! How completely we have been "*bewitched*" ! How horribly we have been *imposed upon* ! How has the *truth* been turned into *fables* ! How has the *word* of God been made of none effect through the *traditions* of men ! " Our fathers have *inherited lies, vanity*, and things wherein there is *no profit*" !

Hear for yourselves, think for yourselves, judge for yourselves, act for yourselves, and then you will *know* for yourselves that every prophet that came with the " Burden of the word of the Lord," preached EXCLUSIVE SALVATION.

Why, the very *presence* of a new prophet argued that all the people were " gone astray." The very *presence* of a prophet of the Lord always did, and always will, involve the salvation or damnation of the people to whom he is sent. Jehovah does not trifle with men, but expects to be heard and obeyed through his servants the prophets.

The Lord *never did* send two or more contradictory messages to any people. It is thoroughly inconsistent with his character and perfections. When two men profess to have been sent by the Lord to the same people with conflicting messages, it is a certain truth that one or both of them are false teachers, impostors, wicked designing men, feeding and fattening on the credulity of the people. The message which any true prophet brings is always an exclusive message. It is approbation or condemnation. It proves a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death. There is no middle course. The people must *receive or reject it*. If received, it will prove their exclusive salvation. If rejected, it will prove their exclusive damnation. There is no alternative. It is a stern law of necessity. A truth that proves itself without reason, and without argument. If a people to whom Jehovah sends a message have power

to receive or reject that message with impunity, *they are not accountable creatures*. Jehovah has *no power* over them. They are his equals. And who thinks of rendering homage to their equals, especially when those equals send a message to us requiring our implicit submission, filled with terrible denunciations in case of our refusal? No one, certainly. We should treat the message and its authors with perfect contempt.

In precisely a similar condition, do the opposers of the doctrine of exclusive salvation place the all-powerful Jehovah.

If Wesleyan Methodism be true ; if Wesleyan Methodist preachers be sent of God ; then every other form of religion is a gross imposture, and all other preachers are false teachers, crafty deluders, having no authority whatever from God. Every man who does not become a real Wesleyan Methodist must be damned, and every one who does become a real Wesleyan Methodist must be saved.

On the contrary, if the Roman Catholic church be the true church ; if Roman Catholic priests be sent of God ; then Wesleyan Methodism, then "Mormonism," and every other ism is false ; then Wesleyan Methodist preachers, and all other preachers are false teachers ; if we believe their words it will not save us ; if we reject their messages we shall not be damned. If the Roman Catholic religion be true, we cannot be saved without becoming Roman Catholics, and we must be damned if we do not become Roman Catholics. No other religion will save us or avail us one jot, and no other religion can condemn us. If the Roman Catholic religion be false, we cannot possibly *be saved by it* ; neither can we possibly *be condemned by it*. It is altogether powerless : it is worse than useless.

God never did, and never will save a single soul by means of a *false religion*, or through the medium of *false prophets*. He will not give the glory and power of salvation to impostors, or impostures : but he will judge all the world by that system, that Gospel, that Priesthood, that man which *He has ordained, and by no other*. When the works of false religions and false prophets are presented before the bar of God, the great Judge of all the earth will say—Who hath required this at your hands ? Depart from me ye cursed ; I never knew you. Then, if not before, will all know for themselves the truth of the doctrine of exclusive salvation. Then will it be manifest that *those authorized of God, and those alone*, have power to bind on earth and bind in heaven, to loose on earth and loose in heaven. Salvation will be *confined exclusively* to those who obeyed the warning voice of the duly empowered servants of God, and damnation will be *poured out exclusively* upon those who rejected the warning voice of those servants. What, then, becomes of Sectarianism ? It will be blasted to the four winds of heaven. It will crumble to dust before the majestic march of Eternal Truth. It will be swallowed up in the victorious triumph of the Kingdom and Sons of God. Amen.

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